Role of the Site Administrator in Induction

Santa Cruz/Silicon Valley New Teacher Project
New Teacher Center Symposium
February 14, 2017
Session 50E
Santa Cruz/Silicon Valley
New Teacher Project

A high-quality two-year program of personalized and contextualized mentoring support for new teachers in a consortium of Bay Area districts and charter schools. Highly trained mentors meet weekly with new teachers to develop their habits of practice and improve student learning through cycles of inquiry. SC/SVNTP has been in continuous operation since 1988 and is a founding partner of the national New New Teacher Center.

We partner with:
- 37 Districts/Charters
- 80 Mentors
- 660 New Teachers

Three Program Components

1. High-quality regular mentoring
2. Formative Assessment and Support System
3. Personalized Professional Learning

Mentoring Impacts Teacher Learning and Student Growth

95% New Teachers
100% Mentors
97% Site Admins.

"Developing a professional relationship between new teachers and their mentors provides our teachers with much needed professional and emotional support. The guidance provided by mentors has really made a difference for our new teachers as they consider our students needs in developing effective lessons and units."

- Site Administrator, SC/SVNTP
ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL IN BEGINNING TEACHER INDUCTION

Anne Watkins, Senior Director, Teacher Induction

The positive impact of a leader who creates a caring learning community focused on student success is evident to all, including beginning teachers. Research reveals that inadequate support from school administration is one of the three most often reported causes of a new teacher’s decision to leave the profession (Richard Ingersoll). Susan M. Johnson’s and Sarah Birkeland’s study “Project on the Next Generation of Teachers” reports: “If given the choice between a school where they could earn a significantly higher salary and one with better working conditions, teachers would choose the school with better working conditions by a margin of 3 to 1.” Principals who are knowledgeable about the issues affecting new teachers, proactive in supporting them, and committed to professional growth do make a significant difference. Principals also play a critical role in induction by setting the stage for beginning teacher and mentor success, and because new teachers are often placed in classrooms teaching students who most need optimal learning experiences, it is even more important that principals understand and support induction. This practice brief offers ideas and possible ways the principal can support teacher induction.

Principals can:

• BE AWARE OF THE CHALLENGES BEGINNING TEACHERS FACE. NTC has identified six “attitudinal phases” most beginning teachers experience during their first year of teaching—anticipation, survival, disillusionment, rejuvenation, reflection, and anticipation. Like mentors, principals who know these phases and when they occur can tailor their support throughout the school year. By noticing how they coincide with specific events and responsibilities, such as parent conferences and the grading cycle, a principal can be prepared to better meet the needs of their beginning teachers. Regularly conferring with mentors and beginning teachers about the support needed can help them thrive.

• REMIND THE STAFF THAT THE NEW TEACHER IS STILL LEARNING. In the past, there has been a perception that teachers graduate from pre-service programs as fully-formed teachers, prepared for all the responsibilities they will face. Challenges were not talked about and teachers were expected to keep their mistakes to themselves. Today we have begun to embrace the norm of life long learning for all educators. Principals can reinforce this by articulating it explicitly—to all staff, especially new teachers. This can provide a culture of safety in which to take risks and embrace learning throughout their professional lives.

• VALUE AND ARTICULATE THE VITALITY THAT NEW TEACHERS BRING TO THEIR SCHOOL. New teachers can be hesitant to share their thinking publicly—during staff meetings or in conversations with principals—heeding the adage that new teachers should be quiet during their first years. Building a community where every person is valued, including the newest members of the staff—their understanding of current innovations in teaching strategies and thinking, competence with new technology, and their energy and optimism—goes a long way to make a new teacher feel appreciated and respected.

• UNDERSTAND THE COMPONENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE INDUCTION PROGRAM and integrating it into the overall school goals and professional development plans. Truly effective and sustained induction programs are integral to schools and districts. A principal’s ability to explain the components of induction to staff, parents, and the school community and see induction as part of the infrastructure of the school strengthens support for novice teachers. By communicating regularly with district induction leaders, principals can stay current with new requirements, guidelines, and protocols.

• KNOW THE ROLE OF THE MENTOR. In the past, and still in many places, a mentor assumed the role of “buddy”, lending an empathetic ear and offering a kind and supportive word. While emotional support is important in building trust, to accelerate beginning teacher growth, mentors must do much more. Instructional mentors focus their support on teaching and learning. Mentors must have a clear picture of effective teaching, be able to talk about best pedagogical practice and content aligned with rigorous student standards, balance beginning teachers’ immediate concerns and long term growth, and collaboratively build inquiry and reflection as a part of best practice. The principal who knows the strategies and tools that comprise mentor and beginning teacher
work—observing and giving feedback, analyzing student work, accessing school and community resources, planning lessons—avoids misunderstandings and aligns support. Knowing the role and responsibilities of both mentor and new teacher sends a clear message of support and respect.

SITE POLICIES, STRUCTURES AND PROCEDURES THAT SUPPORT BEGINNING TEACHERS

There are numerous ways a principal can model support for beginning teachers.

• Introduce new teachers to their colleagues. Principals might show new teachers around the school and hold a welcome lunch.

• An initial conversation about philosophy, expectations of student learning, clarifying goals, strengths and areas for focus can lay the foundation for a collegial relationship. Discussing goals, strengths, and challenges helps the principal discover how best to support each new teacher. The principal can explain expectations, the evaluation process, and timeline. As much as possible principals can align the teacher’s assignment to their strengths, keep the class sizes as small as possible, and keep the most challenging students from being disproportionately placed in beginning teachers’ classrooms. Holding regular meetings with new teachers builds trust and support, provides critical information, and allows for necessary questions.

• According to a MetLife Surveys of the American Teacher, most new teachers say they are very satisfied with their relationships with other teachers. Teachers who are most likely to leave the profession are those who are less satisfied than others with their school relationships. They are less likely to strongly agree that their principal created an environment which helped them be an effective teacher, asked for their suggestions, showed appreciation for their work, and treated them with respect. They enter the profession expecting the principal to help them become better teachers. (MetLife survey reference, see resources)

MENTOR AND PRINCIPAL RELATIONSHIP—COMMUNICATION, COLLABORATION AND COORDINATION

Little is more important in building effective induction programs than the principal and mentor relationship. Principals can inform mentors about school needs, goals, procedures, policies, and practices, and how best to navigate the school context. They can keep mentors aware of their concerns and offer suggestions for support. Mentors can explain their roles, share sample formative assessment tools, articulate expectations for beginning teachers, and note beginning teacher professional learning offered by the induction program. Beginning teachers can benefit from this alignment between the principal and mentor support.

• Principals can schedule regular meetings with mentors. These meetings can be brief check-ins or longer conferences that let principals know the types of support their new teachers are receiving, offer suggestions, and ask questions. Mentors aim to build strong relationships between beginning teachers and principals. Three-way meetings allow mentors to strengthen these interactions so beginning teachers can grow as professionals and assume leadership roles.

• Mentors can make certain that principals understand the rationale for and support confidentiality between a beginning teacher and mentor. In order for beginning teachers to take the necessary risks to grow, they must feel safe. Thus, they must trust that the relationship between themselves and their mentor is confidential. A principal who understands and respects this
confidentiality fosters a community of trust. Involved principals develop effective three-way relationships that sanction confidentiality and clearly demonstrate that everyone is working toward a common goal—successful teaching and learning.

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT INTERSECTS WITH PRINCIPAL SUPERVISION AND EVALUATION

Formative assessment is a key component in successful induction. It is ongoing, responsive to teacher developmental needs, collaborative, aligned with student content standards and professional teaching standards, and based on multiple data sources. Valuable summative assessment has the same characteristics and is a part of a complete system of assessment. Just as effective student assessment includes ongoing, formative feedback as well as a final, summative assessment, the same holds true for teachers, mentors and administrators. Often, induction program formative assessment systems are separate from district evaluation. There are a number of ways principals and mentors can integrate teacher assessment:

- **ALIGN PROFESSIONAL GOAL SETTING.** Ideally, the goal setting process is the same in the induction program and district. Because induction programs are often created and added to district programs, two different processes can often exist. Over time, many induction programs have had a positive impact on improving a district’s structures, including protocols for setting and working toward professional goals. If beginning teachers experience aligned district and induction goal setting, including the same language and structures, it sends a message that induction is an important part of a district’s mission.

- **PRINCIPALS CAN ASSESS BEGINNING TEACHER GROWTH AND EFFECTIVENESS.** Traditionally, principals have been regarded primarily as teacher evaluators and many administrator preparation programs have not included teacher formative assessment in the curriculum. When principals recognize the power of formative assessment to improve teacher effectiveness and accelerate growth, it becomes a priority to support ongoing learning. Regular classroom visits focused on a teacher’s goals and sanctioned time for self-assessment, send the message of commitment to effective instruction and optimal learning for all students.

INFLUENCING THE SYSTEM

While there must be system-wide support for induction, principals can do much to influence the system. A principal who advocates for making reasonable working conditions for new teachers district policy, can change the status quo. Principals who share data of mentor support that resulted in better teaching and learning, with stakeholders such as other principals, union representatives, district administrators, the community and the media, are exercising their leadership in profound ways. Leadership used in such a powerful way can have a significant influence on sustaining and growing our profession.

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

1. How does your induction program communicate with principals about teacher induction and development? What other strategies can be put in place?

2. What are examples of how some principals in your schools support new teachers? What other strategies can you suggest and help to implement?

3. How can you support principals in including formative assessment in the evaluation process for new teachers? Can the district evaluation protocols be aligned with and integrated into your induction program’s formative assessment?

4. How can principals become allies in cultivating or reinforcing system norms of lifelong learning, appropriate working conditions, and valuing new teacher voices?
CASE STUDY:
COLLABORATION FOR NEW TEACHERS

Like a conductor who brings the musicians together to perform a symphony, or a basketball coach who encourages the team from the sideline throughout a game, a principal’s role is to identify, maximize and coordinate all the available resources to run a school.

My life as a principal was full, and at times overwhelming. I was handed the keys and given my marching orders—do everything I can to raise student achievement. My school was part of a district deep into sanctions of No Child Left Behind.

The district provided many coaches for classroom teachers. They came in and out of my school; most rarely interacted with me. In the craziness before school opened, I agreed to meet with Marina, the beginning teacher mentor assigned to the school. At the time, I could not imagine the degree to which she would support my vision for the school, the staff, and most importantly, our students.

As Marina and I sat down, I asked: “What can I do for you?” In her own way she responded: “let me share with you what I can do for you.”

Marina asked about my goals for the school. As we talked, I realized that her support would help the beginning teachers, and me achieve these goals. She filled me in on her teaching experience, the number of teachers she would be supporting, and the amount of time she would meet with each. Marina shared the formative assessment cycle that she and the beginning teachers would use to improve practice, the beginning teacher’s and her responsibilities, and the professional development she would receive to hone her mentoring skills. We ended the conversation by discussing mentor and beginning teacher confidentiality—clarifying what Marina could share with me, what could I share with her, and the importance of giving these teachers a safe, trusting environment within which to grow. I left this brief and focused conversation realizing that I had a colleague who was committed to the same goal as I was: supporting teachers to improve student learning.

During that year, Marina and I met every three weeks. With each meeting, our interactions became more focused. We planned intensive support uniquely necessary for a beginning teacher. I didn’t have time to provide the in-depth support for my new teachers, for back-to-school night, preparation for parent conferences, and the district evaluation process.

At a third grade data team meeting, I noticed that Amanda, a beginning teacher, had analyzed her students’ assessment results in surprising detail and depth, identifying student needs and implications for her need to differentiate her instruction. As she shared her “data story,” Amanda’s colleagues took interest in the assessment tool and protocol she used. I realized that this was a tool Marina had shared with me. From that time forward, I was more closely aligned with Marina in supporting the new teachers as well as their more experienced colleagues. The role of principal is challenging and often isolating. Marina’s support for my new teachers made my job easier and more collaborative.

Marina reinforced my special responsibility to support teachers in the critical first years of their professional lives.

—Mike Heffner, Vice President, Leadership Development, NTC

RESOURCES


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<tr>
<th>Evidence of Strength (Provide specifics from current practice):</th>
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<th>Evidence of Strength (Provide specifics from current practice):</th>
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**Areas for Growth (Apply the Language of the Continuum when possible):**

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<tr>
<th>Date(s) goals discussed with administrator:</th>
<th>Goal:</th>
<th>Doable actions to meet goal (Include relevant Induction processes):</th>
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**Professional Learning/Resources/Research To Meet Goal:**

**Measurable, observable evidence of meeting goal:**

**What is the relationship between the site goal and the Induction goal?**

**What is the site goal?**

**Plans instruction incorporating a repertoire of strategies to specifically meet students' diverse language and learning needs and styles to advance learning for all.**

**Facilitates opportunities for students to reflect on their learning and the impact of instructional strategies to meet their learning and language needs.**

**Incorporates differentiated instructional strategies into ongoing planning that addresses culturally responsive pedagogy, students' diverse language, and learning needs and styles.**

**Uses assessments of students' learning and language needs to inform planning differentiated instruction.**

**Plans instruction using a wide range of strategies to address learning styles and meet students' assessed language and learning needs. Provides appropriate support and challenge for students.**

**Incorporates results from a broad range of assessments into planning to meet students' diverse learning and language needs.**

**Selects strategies for single lessons or sequence of lessons that respond to students' diverse learning needs.**

**Is aware of student content, learning, and language needs through data provided by the site and district.**

**Facilitates opportunities for students to reflect on their learning and the impact of instructional strategies to meet their learning and language needs.**

**Incorporates differentiated instructional strategies into ongoing planning that addresses culturally responsive pedagogy, students' diverse language, and learning needs and styles.**

**Uses assessments of students' learning and language needs to inform planning differentiated instruction.**

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**CSTP 4.4 Plans instruction and incorporates appropriate strategies to meet the learning needs of all students.**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level/Subject:</th>
<th>School:</th>
<th>Mentor:</th>
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**If applicable, what is the connection to the Fall Inquiry Cycle Action Plan?**

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**SC SWFP 6.21.16**
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<tr>
<th>Plan</th>
<th>Professional Learning/Resources/Research To Meet Goal:</th>
<th>Measurable, observable evidence of meeting Goal:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date Goals revisited with administrator:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revisited or New Goal (Apply the Language of the Continuum when possible):</td>
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**Mid-Year Co-assessment Date:** 5/4/2016
Santa Cruz/Silicon Valley New Teacher Project
Quarterly Mentor-Administrator Meetings: Rationale, Agenda Topics and Agenda Template

Mentors and site administrators have a common goal—to ensure every child has an excellent teacher every year. In order to accomplish this goal, mentors and site administrators need to work together to develop systems of support for new teachers that will help them grow quickly, stay in teaching, and become the kind of excellent educators all of their students deserve.

This system of support for the new teacher includes not only the strong and supportive relationship between the mentor and new teacher, it also requires a strong relationship between the new teacher and the site administrator as well as between the mentor and the site administrator. When these relationships are situated in a positive school climate that values ongoing learning, genuine collaboration, and a focus on positive outcomes for all, the positive impact is multiplied. Despite site administrators’ busy schedules, nearly all report that they value and depend upon regular communication with Mentors.

For all of these reasons, it is imperative that mentors work to build and sustain close partnerships with site administrators over the course of the year. We do so by meeting at least quarterly with site administrators to discuss all new teachers in the building and, at least once during the year, meet as a triad with the site administrator and the new teacher to set/review progress toward goals, problem solve, and provide formative feedback.

Below is a tentative calendar of topics for quarterly meetings between Mentors and Site Administrators.

August-September

- Make introductions.
- Introduce and explain the Induction model.
- Introduce resources with more information about SC/SVNTP.
- Explain the role of Mentors—what you can do and what you do not do. Use the Mentor Agreements for talking points, if needed.
- Explain the role of the Site Administrator in Induction. Refer to the Site Administrator tab on the website for talking points and reference materials, as needed.
- Explain expectations for PTs working with SC/SVNTP. Reference the Participating Teacher Handbook and the PT Agreements for talking points, as needed.
- Double check Participating Teacher’s names and assignments to ensure all new teachers in need of support are enrolled.
- Discuss plans for a Site Orientation for Participating Teachers. Provide support and ideas, as needed. Provide the Site Orientation Checklist, if needed.
- Introduce relevant SC/SVNTP Induction processes (see your SC/SVNTP Induction Toolkit), including:
  - Mid-Year Required Evidence—share expectations and timelines
  - CSTP Essential Elements, the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) and the new process for Site Administrator consultation.
    - Learn about the school’s goals in relation to the CSTP Essential Elements.
    - Learn about the school’s timeline, process, and tools for goal setting with teachers.
    - Learn about the Site Administrator’s goals for the Participating Teacher—what do they feel it would be important for this Participating Teacher to focus on?
  - Knowing Students, School, and Community Tools—explain that first priority is to support the PT in understanding his/her students, school, and community so they can tailor their instruction to the needs and strengths of their students.
  - Mentor Guided Observations
Share about the requirement that PTs observe veteran teachers to support them in meeting their goals either in-person or via video.

Share that SC/SVNTP will provide funds to support one day of substitute teaching for each Participating Teacher to do an in-person Mentor Guided Observation, if workable for the Participating Teacher and the school.

Learn from the Site Administrator about process/possibility for obtaining permission to do an in-person Mentor Guided Observation.

Learn from the Site Administrator about any veteran teachers s/he would recommend for observations.

- Share about the video observation process and provide the Video Observation Information and Consent Form. Ask the Site Administrator to review and sign the form.
- Set meeting schedule for the year. Aim for a second meeting in December-January, and one in April-May.
- Restate any next steps that may have been determined during the meeting, timelines for implementation, and responsible parties.
- Ask for feedback on the meeting to ensure the meeting was useful for the Site Administrator.
- Take notes during the meeting and share notes afterwards with the Site Administrator and other participating parties.

December-January

- Reconnect and check in with the Site Administrator.
- Review the Mid-Year Required Evidence and summarize work done during the Fall with the Participating Teacher. Share any specifics the Participating Teacher gave permission to share.
- Review each Participating Teacher's Individual Learning Plan (ILP) goals and learn from the Site Administrator about his/her perceptions of Participating Teacher’s’ progress towards goals in the Fall and any specific needs for the Spring to support realigning goals to meet Participating Teacher and school needs.
- Share the End-of Year Required Evidence document and introduce the Inquiry Cycle process (new in the Spring). Share tools and explain the process.
- Share about the SC/SVNTP Survey dates and processes. Thank the Site Administrator in advance for taking the survey.
- Learn about the school/district's non-reelect process and timelines. NOTE: While Site Administrators do not have to share the rationale for their decisions regarding non-reelects with either Mentors or Participating Teachers, it is useful for Mentors to know the process and timelines for decision-making so they can support Participating Teachers.
- Learn about upcoming events, scheduling changes, Site Administrator insights, etc. that might impact mentoring or would support further alignment of Induction with other school processes.
- Reconfirm next meeting.
- Restate any next steps that may have been determined during the meeting, timelines for implementation, and responsible parties.
- Ask for feedback on the meeting to ensure the meeting was useful for the Site Administrator.
- Take notes during the meeting and share notes afterwards with the Site Administrator and other participating parties.

April-May

- Reconnect and check in with the Site Administrator.
Review End-of-Year Required Evidence and summarize work done during the Spring with the Participating Teacher. Share any specifics the Participating Teacher gave permission to share.

Review each Participating Teacher's Individual Learning Plan (ILP) goals and learn from the Site Administrator about his/her perceptions of Participating Teacher's progress towards goals in the Spring and any specific needs for the end of the year to support realigning goals to meet Participating Teacher and school needs.

Check in about non-reelects, if applicable.

Share UCSC Induction credit purchase information.

Share End-of-Year Colloquium plans and invite the Site Administrator to join.

Re-share the Site Orientation checklist for Fall to support the Site Administrator in planning for any new hires next year.

Learn about upcoming events, scheduling changes, Site Administrator insights, etc. that might impact mentoring or would support further alignment of Induction with other school processes.

Restate any next steps that may have been determined during the meeting, timelines for implementation, and responsible parties.

Ask for feedback on this meeting and on meetings across the year to ensure alignment with Site Administrator needs.

Take notes during the meeting and share notes afterwards with the Site Administrator and other participating parties.
Site Administrator Meeting Template

[DATE, TIME, LOCATION OF MEETING]

Members Present: [TYPE NAMES HERE]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Materials</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opening and Welcome</strong></td>
<td>· Thank administrator for agreeing to meet</td>
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<td></td>
<td>· Make introductions, if necessary</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Review Agenda</strong></td>
<td>· Discuss purpose of meeting (outcomes) and topics on the agenda</td>
<td>Agenda Notetaking structure</td>
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<td></td>
<td>· Ask for feedback and make adjustments as necessarily</td>
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<td></td>
<td>· Let administrator know you will be taking notes on the meeting for your own purpose and can share with others, if interested</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Participating Teacher Updates</strong></td>
<td>· Summarize current work with participating teachers in non-evaluative way by discussing Induction processes currently underway</td>
<td>Relevant PT information</td>
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<td></td>
<td>· Advocate for any immediate needs related to Participating Teacher working conditions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>· Seek administrator input on PT progress to support alignment of work. Ask for specific areas of support the administrator would like mentors to focus on with PTs.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Aligning Current Induction Work Processes and School Goals</strong></td>
<td>· Introduce and discuss timely and relevant induction processes as outlined in the Mentor Handbook</td>
<td>Relevant Induction Processes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>· Seek relevant information from the administrator on school goals/focus areas, evaluation cycles, upcoming school events and other information related to the school that might impact new teachers, mentoring, and alignment of work.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Determine Next Steps</strong></td>
<td>· Review any agreements, next steps, responsible parties and timelines</td>
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<td></td>
<td>· Review upcoming calendar of meetings and confirm next meeting or work to calendar the next meeting</td>
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<td></td>
<td>· Remind administrator about SC/SVNTP website to locate more information</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reflection and Closure</strong></td>
<td>· Lead reflection on meeting: What was successful? What could be improved for next time?</td>
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</table>
- Thank all parties for attending
- Close